

The Overseers of the Poor for the year 1833
respectfully submit to the Town the follow-
ing report -

The poor were first removed to the present
Work House in April 1804 - it being thirty years
next April since the present mode of support-
ing the Poor has been in operation - During
this period the house has been under the
government of three different masters in-
cluding the present ~~master~~ - The system
has also passed under the revision of twenty
four persons who have served in the office of
Overseer of the Poor without any essential
change in its general features, though with
various alterations and improvements
in its details - The pecuniary result, upon
the whole, does not appear so favourable
as ⁱⁿ some of the more recent establishments
in other towns - The average annual expense
of the town for the thirty years, exclusive of the
money expended in erecting the buildings,
may be fairly stated at twelve hundred
dollars - This however includes the whole
amount drawn from the treasury, about
one third of which has been expended upon
persons who were not inmates of the house -
The amount of expenditure cannot be consider-
ed as objectionable, provided its application
has been such as to produce the most favorable
moral results - From an abuse in the appli-
cation of public monies for the relief and sup-
port of the poor, arising from ~~an~~ improvidence

and carelessness, which, ^{almost} always prevails to a greater degree in the management of the monies of the public, than in those of individuals, public opinion seems to be tending towards an entire abolition of all legal support or relief of the poor, and ~~to~~ ^{leave} leave them to the voluntary charity of those among whom they reside - No doubt that there is just ground for the complaint, that too much has been done at the public expense for the poor, but it by ~~no~~ ^{no} means follows that we should suddenly rush to the opposite extreme of doing nothing in this form - A middle course, for the present at least, seems to be most expedient - This medium has been the professed object of those who have administered the pauper concerns of this town for the last thirty years - As it requires more moral courage to resist the direct importunities of those who are suffering from want than it does to combat public opinion in opposition thereto, no doubt many errors have unreflectingly been committed by the Overseers of the poor in following the impulse of present feeling rather than the dictates of sound judgment - The amount of orders drawn upon the treasurer by the Overseers of the Poor from March 1833 to March 1834 is thirteen hundred, twenty eight dollars and fifty one cents - About one hundred dollars of this has been expended in shingling the roof of the Work House and three hundred and eighty two dollars & seventy five cents for persons who ~~were~~ ^{were} not inmates of the house - A considerable proportion of this last sum has been paid for the board of convicts in houses of correction, in this County and in Suffolk

County - In this County the tax is charged one dollar per week for persons having their legal settlement here, without any deduction for the earnings of the convict, while the convicts in the State's prison are furnished with rations at fifty cents per week and earn enough to pay the whole expense of the prison and leave a considerable surplus - Probably each of the twenty six towns in this County have a similar ground of complaint in regard to their unnecessary expenditure for persons committed to the House of Correction in Ipswich but before any redress can be obtained there must be some united effort to bring it about.

The whole number of subjects in the Work House during the year has been fifty five - viz eighteen men, twenty three women and fourteen children. The average number for the year is about twenty four - There are now in the House twenty eight persons viz eleven men, twelve women and five children. The deaths have been two and there has been less sickness than usually occurs in the same period - There ~~has~~ ^{have} been four commitments of common drunkards by a magistrate -

The conduct of the people belonging to the house has for the most part been orderly and regular. The diminution of the number of places where spirituous liquor is kept for sale and the obvious change of opinion among our citizens in regard to the necessity of the use of ~~it~~ ^{it} as a common drink, render it safer to allow the subjects to go out of the house to labour or for other purposes. Heretofore, much otherwise unnecessary restraint has been imposed upon a large proportion of

of the subjects of the house on account of the numerous temptations to which they were exposed from the places where these liquors were sold as well as from the inconsiderate practice of those who employed them, in ministering to their vitiated appetite. Within the past year only one or two instances have occurred, of persons belonging to the house when allowed to go abroad, obtaining spirituous liquor - and in these instances ~~there~~ ^{there} is strong reason to believe that ~~they were~~ ^{it was} notwithstanding the vote of the town to the contrary, obtained at places where these liquors are sold, distributed and drunk, under the sanction of the laws.

Intemperance is still a source of pauperism - This fact none will deny, though practically many seem not to act according to their belief, otherwise there would be greater unanimity in the efforts that are making to complete a reformation which has been so well begun -

Of the adult persons who have been subjects of the
Werk House for the past year more than one half owe
their destitute condition to the intemperate use
of spirituous liquors. - This fact is not peculiar to
that year. Upon a careful examination of the
records of the Werk House for the whole period
of thirty years during which it has been occupied
the result will be that the average for the whole
time will exceed the proportion of one half.
If to these we add children and kindred, who
are brought to the town, by the intemperance of
those, who by the bonds of natural affection
as well as by the laws of the land are bound
to provide for them the proportion will be very
much increased. - In many of the twenty nine
reports of the Overseers of the Poor which have
preceeded this, they have in various ways,
invited the attention of the inhabitants when
assembled in Town meeting to this appalling
vice of the Overseers for the present year deem
it their duty to continue to repeat the call. -
They are willing to believe that this long continued
attention to the subject by the Overseers of the
Poor has co-operated with other more efficient
means in arousing and invigorating the
sensibility which now so generally prevails
upon this subject among the inhabitants of
this town. - When in 1804 the Overseers of the
Poor decided that no spirituous liquor should
be allowed to be used in the Werk House except
as a medicine, they were in advance of public
opinion, and it was exceedingly difficult to
enforce a rule which was in opposition to the
practice of most of the adult male population.

of the town — In the course of the thirty years which
has passed since that time opinion has gradually
changed first in regard to the necessity of using
these liquors to support labour, then as to the
utility as a refreshing drink and lastly as to
the propriety of using them at all considering
the great danger of their moderate use degener-
ating into the intemperate use and the immense
evil resulting from intemperance — The doctrine
of total abstinence has thus gradually ^{here} obtained
and now prevails extensively over our nation
and elsewhere — Should the Overseers of the Poor
now do what in 1804 very many and perhaps
a majority of the active population of the town
then thought should have been done, that is allow
the moderate use of spirituous liquor as a
common drink to the subjects of the Work House
they would certainly incur the displeasure
of a very large proportion of their constituents —

But notwithstanding this astonishing change
of opinion, and of practice also, still our Work
Houses, Prisons and Hospitals are largely
supplied with subjects who are the miserable
victims of the vice of intemperance —

The proportion of those who are committed to the
state prison who are brought there by this vice
is much larger than of the subjects of work
houses in this and other towns —

The Chaplain of the State Prison in his report of
October 1823 states that of 119 convicts committed
in the year preceding his report 100 owe their
punishment to this vice and that of the 15 recom-^{mit}
~~mended~~ ^{mit} which have taken place during the same
period of time, that it is ^{inferred} ~~believed~~ that every instance
may be traced to the same cause —

at Worcester

in

The State Lunatic Hospital, has been in operation about a year, and at the last return 1611 patients had been received into this institution. The causes of derangement in 33 of these persons is stated as unknown leaving 1281 whose derangement is attributed to some particular cause. — Of this last number a little less than one third, or 39, are stated to be insane by reason of intemperance. — To no other single cause is attributed one third of this number of insane patients, ~~excepting~~ ^{unless} religious excitement and fanaticism, may be considered as one and the same cause, under these two heads are classed 14 patients who owe their insanity to these causes. — This being the state of York Town, the State Prison, the State Lunatic Hospital and to these we might safely add our County Gaol and House of Correction to say nothing of the vastly greater amount of poverty, vice and hopeless wretchedness and misery which is not directly connected with any public establishment, are we not loudly called upon in our municipal capacity to lend our aid to such measures as be devised for diminishing these ~~evils~~ ^{evils} or multiplying evils? — To lessen the facility and convenience of supply to those who misuse these liquors is one mode of diminishing their use by this class, and also of removing some of the temptation from those who are ~~only~~ inclined to use them moderately. — The ground the Selectmen of this town took the last year in refusing to approbate any person as a retailer of spirituous liquors or an innholder, to supply them at his house, deserves ~~our~~ approbation. — Had the County

Commissioners concurred with ^{them} in opinion that
the public convenience did not require that these
liquors should be sold at all within the limits of
this town we should have experienced the benefits
of their decision. — At that time it was understood
that if the town had passed a vote requesting the
Selectmen not to approve any person and the
Selectmen had in consequence of such a vote
withheld their approbation that in that case no
licences would have been granted within this
town — As it was, the number was reduced to
three retailers and one innholder — It will
be the proper time at the annual meeting to
consider this subject and to act upon it as the
public good may seem to require —

Of the deaths which have occurred in the House
in the course of the last year in addition to those
which have been before mentioned we have to
lament that of the wife of the Master of the House
of her we think it proper for us to say that by her
practical good sense, benevolence and activity
she had contributed largely to the success of the
establishment. The situation which she so well
filled was one of great responsibility and calu-
lated to exercise the active virtues of her character.
The best evidence that these virtues were happily
displayed was the universal approbation of those
who were the subjects of her care and the objects
of her kindness as well as of those who have
had the oversight of the institution while
she was there —

“Rob Prantoul
— Simon Sheldon } Overseers
(Copy) James Dowling } of the Board
— Dr. Woodberry”

Beverly March 10th 1834

Copy of the Report
of the Overseers of the
Poor March 10 1834